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NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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NUCLEAR ATTACK SUBMARINE *
USS GREENVILLE, DCA01MM022. *

Saturday, February 17, 2001

Telephone interview of Mrs. Carol Brehmer
by

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Office of Marine Safety, National Transportation
Safety

Board.

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MS. BREHMER: Hi. This is Carol.

MR. TYRRELL: Good afternoon. I have a tape recorder running, so that you know right away. And -- and I obtained permission from your -- from your husband to tape record his conversation. I would like to get the same permission from you to tape record our conversation?

MS. BREHMER: Yes, that's all right -- (inaudible).

MR. TYRRELL: Okay. And I will send you a copy of the tape.

MS. BREHMER: Okay.

MR. TYRRELL: Okay. I was wondering if you could start with when you first arrived at the submarine base in Pearl Harbor and just start telling me what your -- your visit was like and what you did and what you were told. I'll try not to interrupt you unnecessarily.

MS. BREHMER: Okay. I guess we arrived there at about 7:00, 7:30. And the lady who was in charge of -- (inaudible) -- she met us in the

1 parking lot. We followed her over to the -- where
2 the submarine was. And she got out of the car and
3 we went over and -- (inaudible) -- we could see the
4 submarine, and we met the crew.

5 MR. TYRRELL: Mm-hmm.

6 MS. BREHMER: Part of the crew. Met the
7 captain -- (inaudible) other crewmembers-- and chief
8 of staff. And they just welcomed us. And at that
9 point we were invited onto the submarine and went
10 directly down into the submarine.

11 And -- first started out in the mess. And
12 I remember they showed us a few slides, talked a
13 little bit about the submarine and passed out some
14 packets.

15 MR. TYRRELL: Uh huh.

16 MS. BREHMER: And just reviewed a little
17 bit about what we would see. And then the next
18 thing I remember is we all went up on the submarine
19 again-- (inaudible).

20 MR. TYRRELL: Mm-hmm.

21 MS. BREHMER: I don't know. It may have
22 been an hour that passed by then or 45 minutes.

23 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

24 MS. BREHMER: And we put on life jackets

1 and went up on the deck area -- I guess the deck
2 area. I'm not sure what you call that.

3 MR. TYRRELL: On the outside?

4 MS. BREHMER: On the outside.

5 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

6 MS. BREHMER: And --

7 MR. TYRRELL: On the open deck?

8 MS. BREHMER: On the open deck.

9 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

10 MS. BREHMER: And -- (inaudible) -- there
11 was a diver there to help us in case we fell in, but
12 it was pretty -- the surface was not very slippery.

13 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

14 MS. BREHMER: That's -- we just were able
15 to look out at Pearl Harbor, take pictures and do
16 whatever, call friends if we wanted to. We were up
17 there for at least 30 minutes.

18 And then we went back down. And I think we
19 were back down in the mess again. And then shortly
20 after that there was four of us that were invited to
21 go up on the very top, the sail or the --

22 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Up on the conning
23 tower?

24 MS. BREHMER: The tower.

1 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

2 MS. BREHMER: And were -- that was Jay and
3 I and John Hall. And we put our -- the gear on --
4 harness that we needed for safety. They assisted us
5 in putting that on, and we climbed up there. We
6 were up there for at least a good 20, 25 minutes.
7 Visited with the captain, took pictures. It was a
8 great view. And then I think I was the first one to
9 go back down.

10 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Where did you go when
11 you went back down?

12 MS. BREHMER: I'm assuming we went back to
13 the mess 'cause -- (inaudible). And then I think
14 after that those of us that were -- they were only
15 taking a few up at a time. So those of us that were
16 left went on -- we started on a tour. So -- we went
17 down in the torpedo room.

18 MR. TYRRELL: Uh huh.

19 MS. BREHMER: And they talked to us for
20 quite a while down there, and that's when I started
21 to get seasick down there.

22 MR. TYRRELL: Uh huh.

23 MS. BREHMER: And as we were leaving that I
24 told the guy that was giving us the tour --

1 (inaudible) -- I needed to lay down -- (inaudible) -
2 - something to help get through the sickness. And
3 they took me into the -- not the commander's office
4 but I guess the co-commander, the guy that's next --
5 Pfeiffer's his name.

6 MR. TYRRELL: Right.

7 MS. BREHMER: He took me into his cabin and
8 -- and let me lay down in there. And I believe I
9 took a Dramamine. They brought me crackers and
10 water. And they said that -- you know, I'd be --
11 feel much better by laying down, and that was true.
12 And they said once that we dive down it'll be much
13 better. We're -- we're on the surface still.

14 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

15 MS. BREHMER: And so I just laid down in
16 there. I think it was at least an hour. They kept
17 checking on me, making sure I was okay. And I know
18 the doctor that was on board came in several times.

19 And I -- once they went -- I could hear 'em
20 saying, "Dive, dive," and I knew that we were going
21 down. I was okay after that.

22 And I came out -- or I found somebody and I
23 said I needed to catch up with the group. And they
24 took me to into the sonar room, which was I think

1 right there on the same level -- (inaudible) --
2 around the corner and met up with Jay again. And
3 there was a few other people in there but I don't
4 remember who. Two or three other people in there
5 that were with our group. And then there -- I know
6 there was two people at the sonar screen and then
7 there was at least two other gentlemen in there also
8 that were standing.

9 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

10 MS. BREHMER: One went to lunch, I know, at
11 one point -- (inaudible).

12 And then -- and I remember we saw the -- we
13 heard the whales on the sonar. I know that some
14 people had been in there for a while. So I was only
15 there probably for about 15 minutes.

16 MR. TYRRELL: Mm-hmm.

17 MS. BREHMER: And then I think at that
18 point we went into the control room. I think that
19 might have been the first time I was in there. And
20 we were allowed to look at -- (inaudible) outta the-
21 - periscope, and I think that was Pfeiffer that was
22 in there with us. Had a conversation with him and
23 just -- we just stood in there for a while. That
24 was the only thing that I remember actually

1 physically touching or looking into.

2 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. So -- so the submarine
3 was at periscope depth at that point?

4 MS. BREHMER: I -- I assume.

5 MR. TYRRELL: 'Cause you could look out --

6 MS. BREHMER: Yeah, it had to have been.

7 Yeah, 'cause I could look out. And we did see a
8 vessel out there that we focused on.

9 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. This was before lunch?

10 MS. BREHMER: Right. There -- I think
11 there was a group eating lunch at that point and we
12 were the last group-- (inaudible).

13 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. So the only thing you
14 did is look into the periscope, is that correct?

15 MS. BREHMER: Right.

16 MR. TYRRELL: At this time?

17 MS. BREHMER: I remember seeing the flat
18 screen -- (inaudible) -- other people.

19 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. After -- after that
20 what did you do?

21 MS. BREHMER: I think we went and ate
22 lunch.

23 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

24 MS. BREHMER: And we went up to the --

1 (inaudible) -- commander's dining room to have
2 lunch.

3 MR. TYRRELL: And after lunch -- in light
4 of your seasickness did you --

5 MS. BREHMER: Yeah.

6 MR. TYRRELL: -- did you have a good lunch?

7 MS. BREHMER: Yeah, it was a very nice
8 lunch.

9 MR. TYRRELL: Good.

10 MS. BREHMER: I was feeling pretty good.

11 MR. TYRRELL: Good. After lunch what did
12 you do?

13 MS. BREHMER: We went down to the torpedo
14 room.

15 MR. TYRRELL: Uh huh.

16 MS. BREHMER: And -- which I didn't really
17 want to do again, but I was fine. I went down there
18 again and they showed us how to -- how they put, I
19 guess, torpedoes in there and what levers they push
20 and the pressure that was used to shoot the -- it
21 was too technical for me to, you know, repeat all
22 the details. But some people were allowed to
23 actually touch the levers. And I did at one point
24 put on a suit and crawl up into the tube--

1 (inaudible).

2 MR. TYRRELL: Oh, you did?

3 MS. BREHMER: But I didn't go all the way
4 down. It was too far down.

5 (Pause)

6 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. After you got through
7 with the -- in the torpedo room where did you go?

8 MS. BREHMER: I think that's when we went
9 back up to -- I think that's when we all met back up
10 in the control room.

11 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. And what was going on
12 in the control room when you got there?

13 MS. BREHMER: I just remember going in and
14 finding a -- I just found a seat in there.

15 MR. TYRRELL: Uh huh.

16 MS. BREHMER: (Inaudible) -- ended up
17 sitting.

18 MR. TYRRELL: Were you sitting in a chair?

19 MS. BREHMER: It was a bench. It had a pad
20 on it and I know it was on rollers.

21 MR. TYRRELL: Where about -- can -- can you
22 describe where about it was located?

23 MS. BREHMER: Yes, I was standing -- if
24 you're facing the front -- (inaudible) -the

1 commander standing in the middle facing forward, I
2 was on the left. I was right in front of Jay --
3 (inaudible) he-- was standing. I was sitting.

4 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

5 MS. BREHMER: And we --(inaudible) -- I
6 don't remember -- (inaudible) -- I remember there
7 was a pole right there and that I held onto it.

8 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. What was going on at
9 that time in the control room?

10 MS. BREHMER: I sat -- what I remember is
11 we started doing the -- some maneuvers --
12 (inaudible).

13 MR. TYRRELL: Mm-hmm.

14 MS. BREHMER: I didn't understand --
15 (inaudible) -- I remember hearing -- (inaudible) --
16 you know, 30 degrees -- (inaudible) -- 30 degrees.
17 And I was looking at the gauges but I -- I just
18 remember going up and down and over to the side and
19 back. I know that doesn't sound very technical, but
20 --

21 MR. TYRRELL: Well, you're doing fine.

22 MS. BREHMER: That's -- I guess I didn't
23 know what to expect and that's what I remember.

24 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. At that time were all

1 of the maneuvers being executed only by Navy
2 personnel or were some of the guests also doing some
3 of them?

4 MS. BREHMER: The only time I remember
5 seeing guests do something was blowing the horn --

6 MR. TYRRELL: Uh huh.

7 MS. BREHMER: -- through the bull horn --
8 (inaudible) -- and he was, I think, one --
9 (inaudible) -- one person -- (inaudible) -- I was
10 right there. And then I saw John -- (inaudible) --
11 count to 10 - pull some levers (inaudible) -- there
12 was somebody -- (inaudible).

13 MR. TYRRELL: That was right before the
14 accident?

15 MS. BREHMER: Yes.

16 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

17 MS. BREHMER: And that -- that was all that
18 I saw -- (inaudible).

19 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

20 MS. BREHMER: (Inaudible).

21 MR. TYRRELL: Did you see -- was that John
22 Hall?

23 MS. BREHMER: Right.

24 MR. TYRRELL: Did you see him being

1 instructed before he actually did it? Did you see
2 any Navy people giving him instructions what he was
3 supposed to do?

4 MS. BREHMER: No, I didn't -- (inaudible).

5 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

6 MS. BREHMER: I just remember there was
7 somebody right there and he either had his hand on
8 their hand or vice versa.

9 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

10 MS. BREHMER: It was -- (inaudible).

11 MR. TYRRELL: When the -- when that
12 maneuver took place, can you tell me what happened
13 after -- from the time that that maneuver started
14 until you left the control room?

15 MS. BREHMER: It all happened pretty fast.
16 I know at one point -- I think that is when we
17 started to go up.

18 MR. TYRRELL: Uh huh.

19 MS. BREHMER: And I know that I did see a
20 crew member get on the periscope at least two or
21 three times. He went around.

22 MR. TYRRELL: Mm-hmm.

23 MS. BREHMER: I don't know what his name
24 was. I know I saw the commander -- (inaudible) -- I

1 remember vividly watching him go around. And I did
2 look at the flat screen at one point during that
3 time -to see what they were - (inaudible). I know I
4 -- (inaudible).

5 MR. TYRRELL: Was this before or after Mr.
6 Hall moved the levers?

7 MS. BREHMER: That -- I think that was
8 after, but -- (inaudible). I'm not positive.

9 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Okay. Did you -- did
10 you hear any -- any loud noise or feel any sensation
11 during this maneuver?

12 MS. BREHMER: Yes.

13 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Describe that to me?

14 MS. BREHMER: I guess it -- I would call it
15 a loud bang.

16 MR. TYRRELL: Uh huh. Was there one, two,
17 three?

18 MS. BREHMER: I just remember one.

19 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

20 MS. BREHMER: (Inaudible) -- definitely
21 knew it wasn't -- (inaudible).

22 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. What was his gut
23 reaction?

24 MS. BREHMER: (Inaudible) -- what the hell

1 was that - real loud (inaudible).

2 MR. TYRRELL: Did anybody reply to that
3 question?

4 MS. BREHMER: I don't -- (inaudible).

5 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. And what happened to -
6 - to you and the other guests at that point?

7 MS. BREHMER: I remember we were -- we all
8 kind of looked at each other, and I guess we were
9 escorted out -- (inaudible) -- trying to stay clear.
10 The hallways were narrow. And we were escorted
11 into the mess.

12 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Were you looking at
13 the video display in the mess --

14 MS. BREHMER: Yes.

15 MR. TYRRELL: -- when you got there?

16 MS. BREHMER: Yes.

17 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Tell me what you saw?

18 MS. BREHMER: I saw a boat on there and it
19 looked like it was -- (inaudible).

20 MR. TYRRELL: Did it look similar to the
21 boat that you had previously seen in the periscope?

22 MS. BREHMER: No -- (inaudible) -- looked
23 smaller.

24 MR. TYRRELL: Which one looked smaller?

1 MS. BREHMER: The -- the one on the screen.

2 MR. TYRRELL: The one --

3 MS. BREHMER: When I was in the mess.

4 MR. TYRRELL: Oh, okay. Okay. How long
5 were you in the -- in the mess at this time?

6 MS. BREHMER: Not very long. Probably
7 about, you know, five minutes at the most.

8

9 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Where did you go next?

10 MS. BREHMER: We went down to the torpedo
11 room.

12 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

13 MS. BREHMER: We saw the -- (inaudible).

14 MR. TYRRELL: Did you hear any
15 announcements over the loudspeaker system after the
16 accident relating to the accident?

17 MS. BREHMER: The one I remember was the
18 captain telling the crew to relax, calm down, do
19 what they were trained to do. I'm paraphrasing what
20 he said.

21 MR. TYRRELL: Uh huh.

22 MS. BREHMER: (Inaudible) -- but I don't --
23 I really don't remember -- (inaudible).

24 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. We have been told --

1 we were informed by somebody that there -- that the
2 Navy may have served alcohol to the guests, and can
3 you tell me whether that -- that was a true or false
4 statement?

5 MS. BREHMER: That was false.

6 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Did any one of the
7 guests, to your knowledge, bring any alcohol aboard
8 the submarine?

9 MS. BREHMER: No.

10 MR. TYRRELL: I have to -- I had to ask.

11 MS. BREHMER: Yeah -- (inaudible).

12 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

13 MS. BREHMER: It would have helped--
14 (inaudible).

15 (Laughter)

16 MR. TYRRELL: Is there -- is there anything
17 else about this incident that I -- that you haven't
18 told me that you think might be important to our
19 investigation?

20 MS. BREHMER: I'd say that how much the
21 crew did to try to help from what we could see. You
22 know, we were down in the torpedo room --
23 (inaudible) -- we knew that -- (inaudible) -- people
24 come down -- (inaudible).

1 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

2 MS. BREHMER: And they -- they were all
3 very helpful -- (inaudible).

4 MR. TYRRELL: If you think of -- of
5 anything else over the next -- at any time, could
6 you call me and let me know what that is?

7 MS. BREHMER: Sure.

8 MR. TYRRELL: That would be great. I'd
9 like to thank you and your husband for taking the
10 time out of your day to talk to me. And it's been
11 very helpful and very informative.

12 Do you have any questions you'd like to ask
13 me about NTSB or -- or anything else before I sign
14 off?

15 MS. BREHMER: I guess my only question
16 would be the release of our names -- (inaudible).

17 MR. TYRRELL: Well, the Navy -- that's --
18 we got your names from the Navy.

19 MS. BREHMER: Right.

20 MR. TYRRELL: Any request that we get for -
21 - to release names we're going to direct back to the
22 Navy.

23 MS. BREHMER: (Inaudible).

24 MR. TYRRELL: And so we -- we don't intend

1 to release any names.

2 MS. BREHMER: Okay.

3 MR. TYRRELL: But what the Navy does I
4 don't know.

5 MS. BREHMER: Okay. (Inaudible) -- I know
6 they're going to come out. I just --

7 MR. TYRRELL: Well, eventually.

8 MS. BREHMER: We know that.

9 MR. TYRRELL: Well, I haven't been -- at
10 this point in time I have not --

11 MS. BREHMER: Okay.

12 MR. TYRRELL: -- been told that we are
13 going to release any names. You know, I -- I --
14 nobody has told me that, so.

15 MS. BREHMER: Okay.

16 MR. TYRRELL: This is news.

17 MS. BREHMER: Okay. But --

18 MS. BREHMER: Well, --

19 MR. TYRRELL: -- I'm hearing a lot of new
20 stuff every day, you know.

21 MS. BREHMER: Right. Right. Okay.

22 MR. TYRRELL: All right.

23 MS. BREHMER: I don't have any other
24 questions.

1 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

2 MS. BREHMER: (Inaudible) -- you.

3 MR. TYRRELL: All right. Well, thank you -

4 -

5 MS. BREHMER: Okay.

6 MR. TYRRELL: -- very much.

7 MS. BREHMER: Thank you.

8 MR. TYRRELL: Right. Bye-bye.

9 MS. BREHMER: Bye.

10 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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